



## **Installation and Handling Instructions for using MUD-TRAKS<sup>®</sup>, Super Mats**

1. MUD-TRAKS<sup>®</sup> are very strong, rigid, composite fiberglass Portable Roadway Mats. They do flex and follow the contour of the ground, but still increase the footprint of the tire by 12 to 16 times. The weight of the truck won't break them, but watch out for low hanging rear bumpers, jacks, and under bed boxes. If the tip of the mat gets caught behind those and the driver keeps going, "something" is going to break.
2. MUD-TRAKS<sup>®</sup> are intended for very soft ground conditions, where a man walking will leave a 2" – 3" footmark. If the tires are pushing a "ball" of mud out from under the mats, try doubling them up to make them stiffer and thereby spreading load over a wider area.
3. If the ground under Jacks/Outriggers is unstable or like "chocolate pudding", extra attention needs to be paid to provide a safe, stable foundation. Use Jack/Outrigger Pads, or layers of mats until there is no penetration into the soil. "Safe Stability" is a function of spreading load over a rigid panel; large enough to reduce the psi to a point the ground can support the load.
4. Even if the Jacks/Outriggers have punched a hole in the ground and won't lift the rig, it is possible to fill in the hole, and use a combination of MUD-TRAKS<sup>®</sup> and Jack Pad to lift the vehicle. See #3 above.
5. If the truck is stuck all the way down to the frame, use a combination of MUD-TRAKS and Jack Pads to get it up and then, double the mats under the rear tires and set the truck back down. The mats will carry the load. Make sure the mats are centered and are supported underneath on all four sides of the hole.
6. If the mat is not supported on all sides of the hole (item # 5 above), the truck is off balance and all the weight shifts to the unsupported side and "pinches" the edge. Damage to the mat can occur. Prevention: aim tires for the center of the mat, fill in ruts wider than 18" (sand works great for this), and double-up mats in a quagmire. Mats require some ground integrity to support heavy loads.
7. Going up a steep incline. There is a limit to how steep a grade you can drive up. At some point it is better and safer to winch the rig out with mats under the wheels. Works great. Sometimes it is necessary to use long stakes or spikes through the mat to pin it to the ground. If mats slip, there is nothing wrong with the mat; it's a physics problem. There's only so much grip in greasy mud.
8. Use low gear and a steady accelerator. If the driver guns the motor, truck wins every time. Don't stand behind the truck when driving out on mats. And, if the mats start to move, speeding up doesn't help.
9. MUD-TRAKS<sup>®</sup> are textured on both sides because we are concerned with traction between "tire to mat" and "mat to ground". Traction is almost always better between tire and mat. If the ground is wet, muddy or unstable, the mat can't get a "bite".
10. When in doubt, mat the truck in. Driving in first to see what happens just tears the ground up and makes the job harder.
11. Facts of Life: Rope handles break. Fabricate spare ropes and carry them in the truck.
12. Tie a 5' long rope in one of the auxiliary holes (Model N4596HDS). Makes it easier to drag the mats out from under the truck. And, there's more leverage when standing. (You can also use a hook)



13. A flat shovel helps scrap mud off mats. And fifty pounds of extra mud is hard work.
14. A handy tool you can make to measure the ability of the ground to carry weight without mats is a 2 ½' long, 1/2" dia. steel rod with a "T" handle. Mark the length of the rod every 6". If the rod goes in the ground 6", you don't need mats; 12", the tires will leave a 2" to 3" mark; 18", you're going to get stuck; 24", the truck is going to the frame right there. This works! Try it and you'll soon learn what the rod is telling you.
15. Drillers - Use "cribbing blocks" between Jacks (flat or ribbed) and our Jack Pads. This spreads load over the full face of the Pad. If the Pad is pushing into the ground, slide a MUD-TRAKS® under the Jack Pad to help spread load. We will not warranty a mat/pad damaged by Jack "Ribs".
16. We provide a means to bolt mats together, and to stake them to the ground. Mats are typically bolted together when used for repeated traffic. We have 10" stakes, but if the ground is unstable, longer ones may be required to reach deep enough to get a "bite".
17. Clean the mats with a water hose and elbow grease.
18. We use UV inhibitors in the mats, but the sun finally gets to them. The life expectancy can be greatly increased if the mats are stored inside or covered from direct sunlight.
19. When laying 8' mats, overlap them about 6". Always overlap in the direction the truck is going. That way the mat being driven on controls the tip of the next mat. The softer the mud, the more overlap is required. For "chocolate pudding" it can be as much as 2 feet.
20. If the truck is over 25,000 lbs. and is being used in unstable, off-road situations, the correct mat is the Super Mat, Model N4596HDS.
21. The number of mats per "set" should be enough to cover twice the wheelbase of the vehicle. For utility line trucks, drill rigs, etc. that would be 12 mats per set. Here's the logic. When the truck is backing up and maneuvering, it's almost impossible to predict where the front end is going. And, if the ground is extremely soft, the extra mats are going to be needed under the outrigger pads to prevent damage or to provide a stable base for lifting.
22. The 6' mat models do not have to be overlapped unless the soil is extremely soft. They are short enough so they can't flex up and catch the undercarriage of the vehicle. We still recommend 12 per set.
23. Fiberglass mats will fray around the edges if dropped or dinged. Our newer versions are less prone to this, but it can still happen. We use a grinder on the frayed edges. Cleans them right up. No splinters.
24. Here's how you can tell if MUD-TRAKS® (Super Mat Series) will work. If the ground will support a 200 lb. man walking and leave no more than a 1" - 2" footmark, MUD-TRAKS® can take in any vehicle that is road legal per axle weight.
25. MUD-TRAKS® are made from a composite fiberglass material. They are vehicle traction mats and have a rough textured surface. Hand protection required (gloves). Not intended for pedestrian traffic. Not intended for use as a road plate. Not intended for use with steel track vehicles

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